

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 832

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 KINSHASA 7211

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, CG, AO
SUBJECT: MOBUTU ON ANGOLAN/ZAIRIAN RELATIONS: SOME GIVE?

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT MOBUTU TOLD US REPS JULY 11 THAT:
--HIS PRIOR OFFERS ON CUT-OFF OF AID TO ANGOLAN DISSIDENTS
IN ZAIRE STILL STAND, PROVIDED THAT
--VERIFICATION ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER IS INTEGRAL TO
ANY AGREEMENT;
--THE GONGOLESE GOVERNMENT IS ACCEPTABLE AS A MEDIATOR;
--HE IS WILLING, IF LUANDA WANTS IT, TO SEND A REPRESENTA-
TIVE TO BRAZZAVILLE PROMPTLY (PRE-KHARTOUM) TO EXAMINE POSSIBILITIES,

AND THAT
--HE IS WILLING TO MEET WITH NETO AT KHARTOUM TO DISCUSS
ESTABLISHING A VERIFICATION TEAM UNDER OAU AEGIS. END SUMMARY.

1. AMBASSADOR CUTLER AND AF/C DIRECTOR JUNIOR MET WITH PRESIDENT MOBUTU FOR 75 MINUTES MORNING JULY 11.
2. FOLLOWING MOBUTU'S OPENING REMARKS, A BRIEF LECTURE ON EXCESSIVE USG MORALISM VIS-A-VIS ZAIRE (SEE PARAS 11-13), CONVERSATION SWUNG TO ANGOLAN/ZAIRIAN RELATIONS.

3. JUNIOR LED WITH REFERENCE TO INTER-RELATIONSHIP OF ANGOLAN/
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ZAIRIAN PROBLEMS TO RESOLUTION OF NAMIBIAN AND RHODESIAN ISSUES,
AND FOLLOWED WITH RESUME ON CONTENT AND ATMOSPHERICS OF MCHENRY
TALKS IN LUANDA. (US TALKING POINTS WERE WOVEN INTO ENSUING
EXCHANGE.)

4. MOBUTU SAID THAT HIS INTELLIGENCE SERVICE HAD ACQUIRED
EVIDENCE WHICH WOULD CONFIRM ANGOLAN'S STATEMENT TO MCHENRY

THAT LUANDA WAS DISARMING THE EX-KATANGANS AND BEGINNING TO MOVE THE REFUGEES. HE WENT ON TO ADD, HOWEVER, THAT ZAIRE'S INTENTIONS REGARDING ANGOLA WERE CLEARLY SET FORTH IN THE AGREEMENT HE SIGNED WITH NETO IN FEBRUARY 1976, BUT WHICH NETO DID NOT HONOR BY REFUSING TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT THE KATANGANS. MOBUTU ALSO REFERRED TO HIS JANUARY 1977 SPEECH TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS BEFORE CONCLUDING THAT LUANDA IS "A REGIME OF LIES".

5. THANKING JUNIOR FOR HIS PRESENTATION, MOBUTU SAID THAT HE WOULD HAVE PREFERRED LEARNING THAT WASHINGTON WAS READY TO PROVIDE TWO LIGHT PLANES AND TWO HELICOPTERS FOR USE BY AN OAU OBSERVER TEAM IN VERIFYING A CESSATION OF HOSTILE ACTIVITY OF BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER. VERIFICATION ON BOTH SIDES WAS ESSENTIAL; WITHOUT IT ANY AGREEMENT WOULD HAVE NO UTILITY. THIS TEAM COULD BE COMPOSED, ILLUSTRATIVELY, OF TWO OR THREE AFRICAN COUNTRIES ACCEPTABLE TO ZAIRE AND AN EQUAL NUMBER ACCEPTABLE TO ANGOLA, UNDER OAU AUSPICES. IT SHOULD HAVE FREE ACCESS TO ANY SPOT ALONG THE BORDER, AT ANY TIME,

AT THE REQUEST OF EITHER SIDE. MOBUTU ADDED THAT HE HAD DECIDED TO REARM, TRAIN AND SUPPLY 5,000 FNLA TROOPS AS PROTECTION AGAINST A FUTURE INVASION FROM ANGOLA, BUT THAT HE WOULD REVERSE THAT DECISION IMMEDIATELY IF HE WERE CONFIDENT OF A RECIPROCAL MOVE ON THE PART OF ANGOLA.

6. JUNIOR ASKED WHAT, IF ANYTHING, THE USG COULD DISCREETLY DO TO FACILITATE REOPENING THE DIALOGUE WITH LUANDA. BOTH SIDES
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SEEMED TO BE IN AGREEMENT ON LOWERING BORDER TENSIONS; WHAT NOW COULD BE DONE TO GET THE PROCESS MOVING? MOBUTU REPLIED THAT WE COULD INFORM AMB. MCHENRY IN LUANDA THAT HIS PREVIOUS OFFERS STOOD GOOD AND THAT HE IS READY TO CUT OFF ASSISTANCE TO ANGOLAN DISSIDENTS IF NETO IS WILLING TO RECIPROCATE, INCLUDING THE VERIFICATION FACTOR.

7. ON THE QUESTION OF WHAT AFRICAN COUNTRY MIGHT MOST EFFECTIVELY MEDIATE BETWEEN ZAIRE AND ANGOLA, MOBUTU AT FIRST DISMISSED THE CONGO AND SUGGESTED LIBERIA. WHEN AMBASSADOR CUTLER QUERIED THE POSSIBILITY OF A MEDIATION TEAM COMPOSED OF THE LEADERS OF GUINEA-BISSAU AND LIBERIA, MOBUTU MENTIONED SUDAN'S NUMAYRI BUT THOUGHT HE WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE ACCEPTABLE TO ANGOLA. MOBUTU THEN SUGGESTED CAMEROON'S AHIDJO AS A MORE LIKELY CANDIDATE, AND PROCEEDED TO LINK ZAIRE'S ACCEPTANCE OF MEDIATION TO ANGOLA'S ACCEPTANCE OF AN OAU OBSERVER FORCE. MOBUTU THEN ALTERED HIS EARLIER STAND AND SAID THAT, IF THE ANGOLANS WANTED THE CONGO AS MEDIATOR, HE WOULD AGREE ALSO. MOBUTU THEN PICKED UP THE TELEPHONE AND INSTRUCTED HIS SECURITY CHIEF TO INFORM THE CONGOLESE, VIA THE ZAIRIAN AMBASSADOR IN BRAZZAVILLE, OF HIS DECISION TO ACCEPT THEM AS MEDIATORS.

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8. WHEN ASKED HOW HE THOUGHT A DIALOGUE WITH ANGOLA MIGHT BE LAUNCHED BEFORE THE OAU SUMMIT, MOBUTU REPLIED THAT HE WOULD BE HAPPY TO MEET WITH NETO IN KHARTOUM, OR TO HAVE ADMIRAL LOMPONDA (THE CHIEF OF ZAIRE'S DELEGATION TO THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS OF ZAIRIAN-ANGOLAN JOINT COMMISSION) MEET WITH HIS ANGOLAN COUNTERPART. HE WOULD NOT, HOWEVER, ASK NETO FOR A MEETING -- THAT WAS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE MEDIATOR.

9. THE QUESTION OF WHICH OAU COUNTRIES SHOULD CONSTITUTE THE VERIFICATION TEAM, UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE OAU CHAIRMAN, COULD BE THE FIRST ITEM ON THE AGENDA OF THE MEETING ORGANIZED BY THE CONGOLESE, WHETHER IN BRAZZAVILLE OR KHARTOUM.

10. REFERRING TO THE 1966 CONFERENCE IN NAIROBI OF THE PANAFRICAN FREEDOM MOVEMENT FOR EAST, CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICA, MOBUTU CITED APPROVINGLY A RESOLUTION OF THAT CONFERENCE TO THE EFFECT THAT REFUGEES WHO REFUSE TO RETURN TO THEIR COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN SHOULD

BE MOVED 150 KILOMETERS AWAY FROM THE BORDER. MOBUTU OFFHANDEDLY INDICATED HIS READINESS TO MOVE (WITH UNHCR AND US ASSISTANCE) ALL ANGOLAN REFUGEES FROM BAS-ZAIRE TO BANDUNDU OR OTHER REGIONS OF ZAIRE AT LEAST 150 KILOMETERS FROM THE ANGOLAN BORDER. WE DOUBT HE HAD FOCUSED ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF SUCH A PROPOSAL.)

11. MOBUTU BEGAN THE SESSION BY CHIDING HIS VISITORS FOR THE
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EXCESSIVE MORALISM WHICH HE FEELS CURRENTLY PERVADES WASHINGTON'S VIEW OF ZAIRE. REFERRING TO THE FRANK CONVERSATION WHICH ZAIRIAN COMMISSIONER FOR NATIONAL ORIENTATION MOKOLO HAD RECENTLY WITH AMBASSADOR YOUNG IN NEW YORK AND DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY WALKER IN WASHINGTON, MOBUTU CLAIMED THAT COUNTRIES LIKE NIGERIA AND ALGERIA HAD WORSE RECORDS THAN ZAIRE ON HUMAN RIGHTS, YET ESCAPED CRITICISM BECAUSE OF THEIR OIL WEALTH.

12. HE CONTRASTED THE UPROAR OVER THE ARREST OF FORMER FONMIN NGUZA, WHOM HE CONFIRMED WOULD SOON BE RELEASED, AND THE SILENCE OVER THE MUCH LONGER DETENTION OF BEN BELLA IN ALGERIA. REFERRING TO CRITICISM OF THE EXECUTIONS WHICH HE ORDERED FOLLOWING THE COUP PLOT TRIAL EARLIER THIS YEAR, MOBUTU CLAIMED THERE HAVE BEEN FAR MORE EXECUTIONS IN NIGERIA. HE CONCLUDED WITH THE OBSERVATION THAT HE VIEWED ATTEMPTS TO DICTATE CONDITIONS FOR AID TO ZAIRE A "VERY SERIOUS" MATTER, ASSERTING THAT HE WOULD PREFER HUNGER AND MISERY TO SUBMISSION. MOBUTU EXPRESSED ALL OF THE ABOVE FIRMLY BUT CALMLY.

13. THE AMBASSADOR REMINDED MOBUTU THAT THE US MUST LOOK PARTICULARLY

CAREFULLY AT THE HUMAN RIGHTS PERFORMANCE OF COUNTRIES WHICH ARE MAJOR RECIPIENTS OF US ASSISTANCE. JUNIOR ADDED THAT WALKER HAD SOUGHT TO MAKE MOKOLO FULLY AWARE OF THE AMERICAN POLITICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL REALITIES WHICH OF NECESSITY CONDITION US POLICY TOWARD

ZAIRE AT THE PRESENT TIME.

14. COMMENT: RATHER THAN REPEATING HIS RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENT THAT HE HAD NOTHING TO DISCUSS WITH THE ANGOLANS, MOBUTU RESPONDED POSITIVELY TO OUR EXPLORATIONS. IN SO DOING, HE NEITHER WENT BEYOND HIS 1976 NEGOTIATING POSITION NOR ACKNOWLEDGED IN ANY WAY ZAIRIAN ASSISTANCE TO UNITA. HE ALSO TAILORED HIS REMARKS ON CESSATION OF AID SO AS TO FOCUS ON FNLA AND LEAVE UNITA UNDIS-
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CUSSED. WE HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT HE HAD, PRIOR TO OUR MEETING, NOT THOUGHT THROUGH HIS STRATEGY VIS-A-VIS ANGOLA (IN CONTRAST TO THE CUBANS WHOM HE RAILED AGAINST AND WHOSE NON-ALIGNED POSTURE HE SCOFFED AT). HOWEVER, HE SEEMED TO WELCOME OUR LOW-KEY EFFORT, PERHAPS IN THE THOUGHT THAT THE ANGOLANS MAY, THIS TIME, BE SERIOUS IN WANTING TO COOL OFF THE BORDER. WE CONSIDER OUR EFFORT SO FAR A MILD SUCCESS IN HELPING TO TRIGGER A STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS. BUT THERE'S A LONG WAY TO GO.

15. DEPARTMENT PLEASE REPEAT AS DESIRED.
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